

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Annexed hereto are Replacement Sheets for FIGs. 1-4, 5a, 5b, 6, 7a, 7b, 8, 9-14, 15a and 15b.

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending in the application and stand rejected. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 26 and 27 have been amended. Claims 20-25 have been canceled without prejudice. New claims 28~33 have been added. Reconsideration of the rejections and objections is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Elections/Restrictions

Although Applicants disagree with the restriction requirement, claims 20-25 have been canceled without prejudice as being withdrawn from consideration.

Drawing Objections

Annexed hereto are Replacement Sheets that include formal drawings for FIGs. 1-4, 5a, 5b, 6, 7a, 7b, 8, 9-14, 15a and 15b.

Some of the Figures have been amended to address the drawing objections raised by the Examiner. In particular, FIG. 1 has been amended to include a “Prior Art” legend. FIGs. 5A, 6 and 7a have been amended to remove the labels I, II and III, respectively. In addition, FIG. 9 has been amended to remove model references [8] and [10]. Otherwise, Applicants traverse the drawing objections for FIGs. 8 and 9. There is no requirement to include descriptive titles, and the subject matter and information presented of Figs. 8 and 9 is abundantly clear from the specification. Withdrawal of the drawing objections is requested.

Specification Objections

The specification was objected to for the reasons set forth on page 5 of the Office Action. Applicants have amended the specification to address the objections. Accordingly, withdrawal of the specification objections is requested.

Claim Objections

The claims were objected to for the reasons set forth on pages 5-7 of the Office Action. Applicants have amended the claims to address some of the claim objections, and traverse other claim objections. In particular, Applicants traverse the claim objections regarding inclusion of “one or more”. It is respectfully submitted that such claim changes are legally unnecessary and/or simply redundant, and are not required. In addition, the claims are presented include sufficient antecedent basis. Withdrawal of the claim objections is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 7-9 and 13-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for the reasons set forth on pages 7-8 of the Office Action. Claims 7, 8, 9 and 13 have been amended to address the issues raised by Examiner. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12, 19, 26 and 27 stand rejected as being anticipated by Bastos et al., for the reasons set forth on pages 9-11 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections. Indeed, at the very minimum, claims 1, 10, 26 and 27 are clearly distinguishable from, and not anticipated by, Bastos. The inventions of claims 1, 10, 26 and 27 are generally directed to methods for characterizing device mismatch by processing DC voltage characteristic data of pairs of semiconductor devices to determine a distribution of device mismatch between the semiconductor devices.

Bastos is completely contrasted and opposite in teaching. Bastos teaches a method for characterizing of transistor mismatch by forming a test chip comprising a transistor array and then independently measuring the drain current of each transistor in the array sequentially. (See page 271). Clearly, Bastos does not disclose measuring DC voltage characteristics, much less DC voltage characteristics of device pairs. There is simply no reasonable basis for contending that Bastos teaches obtaining DC voltage characteristics for a transistor pair. In fact, the Examiner's reliance on Bastos in this regard is bewildering because Bastos teaches nothing more than the conventional methods described in Applicants' specification related to FIG. 1, which Examiner requested be labeled "Prior Art".

For at least the above reasons, claims 1, 10, 26 and 27 (and dependent claims) are undoubtedly distinguishable and not anticipated by Bastos. Accordingly, withdrawal of the anticipation rejections is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

The following obviousness rejections were asserted:

- (i) Claim 4 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Bastos in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,731,916 to Haruyama;
- (ii) Claims 5 and 11 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Bastos in view of Conti;
- (iii) Claims 13-16 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Bastos, Conti and U.S. Patent No. 4,851,768 to Yoshizawa et al; and

(iv) Claim 18 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Bastos in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,181,621 to Lovett.

Each of the above obviousness rejections is based on the primary reference Bastos as applied to independent claims 1 and 10. However, as noted above, Examiner's reliance on Bastos as disclosing the features of claims 1 and 10 is wholly misplaced and legally unsupportable. As such, the use of Bastos to establish a prima facie case of obviousness against the dependent claims of claims 1 and 10 renders the obviousness rejections legally deficient on their face.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the obviousness rejections is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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